



Department
for Education

Coasting schools: provisional data

England, November 2016

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Background

The Education and Adoption Act 2016 (the Act) allows the Secretary of State to identify and support coasting schools for the first time. A coasting school is one that over time does not support its pupils to fulfil their potential. The Department consulted on a coasting definition in autumn 2015 and the Act received Royal Assent in March 2016. On 20 October 2016, the Secretary of State laid draft regulations in Parliament¹ setting out the Department's proposed definition of a coasting school. These will require the formal approval of both Houses of Parliament before becoming law.

This definition, with the exception of the thresholds for the 2016 progress scores, was originally published on gov.uk² in June 2015.

This note sets out the definition in full and provides a brief analysis of the number and types of schools that are identified by the proposed definition based on final results for 2014 and 2015 and provisional results for 2016.

No school will be formally identified as coasting until after the revised 2016 results are published in December 2016 for key stage 2 (KS2) or January 2017 for key stage 4 (KS4). The numbers in this document are therefore subject to change, following the publication of the revised results.

Once a school has fallen within the coasting definition, Regional Schools Commissioners (RSCs) acting on behalf of the Secretary of State will engage with the school to consider its wider context, and decide whether additional support is needed to help current leaders improve the school. The Department expects that only in a small minority of cases will RSCs direct a coasting maintained school to become a sponsored academy or move a coasting academy to a new trust. The *Schools Causing Concern* guidance³ sets out how these processes will work.

Published data

School performance data for 2014 and 2015 at key stage 2 and key stage 4 are published in the school performance tables (available here: <https://www.compare-school-performance.service.gov.uk/>).

Provisional 2016 data for key stage 4 was published on 13 October 2016, including the results for individual schools in the school performance tables. Provisional 2016

¹ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukdsi/2016/9780111150498/contents>

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/intervening-in-failing-underperforming-and-coasting-schools>

³ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/510080/schools-causing-concern-guidance.pdf

attainment data for key stage 2 was published on 1 September 2016⁴, however results for individual schools are not published until the revised data in December 2016.

Main points

Our provisional estimate of the total number of schools that meet the definition of a coasting school at either key stage 2 or key stage 4 is 804⁵. This includes 479 schools at key stage 2 and 327 schools at key stage 4, which represents 3.5% of all eligible key stage 2 schools and 10.7% of all eligible key stage 4 schools this year.

These schools have been identified based on final results for 2014 and 2015 and provisional results for 2016.

Schools identified as coasting can also be below the floor standard in an individual year⁶. The Department expects that a sizeable proportion of coasting schools will also be below the floor standard this year. The overall numbers of schools in 2016 that will be either below the floor or coasting will not be available until the revised data is published in December (KS2) and January (KS4).

⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/national-curriculum-assessments-key-stage-2-2016-provisional>

⁵ This is not equal to the sum of those meeting the separate key stage 2 and key stage 4 definitions, as there are two schools which meet both definitions

⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/primary-school-accountability>
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/progress-8-school-performance-measure>

Proposed coasting definition

A school will be identified as coasting if its performance falls below the definition for three consecutive years⁷.

Key stage 2

In 2016, a school will be coasting if:

- In 2014, fewer than 85% of pupils achieved level 4 in English reading, English writing and mathematics, **and** the school has less than the national median percentage of pupils who achieved expected progress in English reading *and* English writing *and* mathematics; **and**
- In 2015, fewer than 85% of pupils achieved level 4 in English reading, English writing and mathematics, **and** the school has less than the national median percentage of pupils who achieved expected progress in English reading *and* English writing *and* mathematics; **and**
- In 2016, fewer than 85% of pupils meet the expected standard in English reading, English writing and mathematics, **and** the school achieves a progress score below -2.5 in English reading *or* below -3.5 in English writing⁸ *or* below -2.5 in mathematics⁹.

Key stage 4

In 2016, a school will be coasting if:

- In 2014, fewer than 60% of pupils achieved 5 A*-C at GCSE (inc E&M), **and** the school has less than the national median percentage of pupils who achieved expected progress in English *and* in mathematics; **and**
- In 2015, fewer than 60% of pupils achieved 5 A*-C at GCSE (inc E&M), **and** the school has less than the national median percentage of pupils who achieved expected progress in English *and* in mathematics¹⁰; **and**
- In 2016, the school has a Progress 8 score below -0.25 and the upper band of the 95% confidence interval is below zero.

⁷ Based on revised or final results published in performance tables.

⁸ The coasting threshold for writing is different to other subjects as the scores are calculated differently. Writing progress scores are based on teacher assessments, rather than performance in tests, which means that the scores do not directly relate to scaled scores in the way that progress scores for test subjects do.

⁹ If the school has one progress score that is below the threshold in that subject, the school will only be coasting if the progress score for that subject is significantly below average – i.e. the upper band of its confidence interval is below zero.

¹⁰ Schools that chose to opt in to Progress 8 early must also have a 2015 Progress 8 score below -0.25 to be coasting.

Schools excluded from the coasting definition

Subject to Parliament agreeing to the regulations, the coasting definition will apply to all mainstream local authority maintained schools and mainstream academies with the relevant key stage 2 or key stage 4 data. It will not apply to Pupil Referral Units, special schools and special academies, alternative provision academies or maintained nursery schools.

A school will also be excluded from the coasting definition if one or more of the following applies in at least one of the three years:

- The number of eligible pupils at key stage 2 is fewer than 11;
- The number of eligible pupils at key stage 4 is fewer than 11 in 2014 or 2015, or fewer than 6 in 2016;
- The school does not have published results against all relevant performance measures;
- Fewer than 50% of pupils have tests or assessments that can be used as prior attainment in the calculations of progress measures; or
- The school closed within the academic year and did not re-open as a converter academy.

Numbers of coasting schools

These schools have been identified based on final results for 2014 and 2015 and provisional results for 2016.

No school will be formally coasting until after the revised results are published in December 2016 for key stage 2 or January 2017 for key stage 4.

The total number of schools that meet the definition of a coasting school at either key stage 2 or key stage 4 is 804.

There are 479 schools that meet the definition at key stage 2 and 327 at key stage 4. There are 2 schools that meet the coasting definition for both key stages 2 and 4¹¹.

¹¹ Note: there were 66 schools which had eligible results in 2016 at both key stages 2 and 4.

Characteristics of coasting schools

The following section details the characteristics of the schools that would be identified as coasting under the proposed definition, based on their final 2014 and 2015 results, and provisional 2016 results.

The numbers of coasting schools are also presented as a proportion of schools with eligible results in the provisional 2016 data, however not all of these schools will have had results for three consecutive years¹².

School types

Table 1: Number of KS2 coasting schools by school type

School type	Eligible schools in 2016	Coasting	%
Academies	2,477	106	4.3
Academy Converter	1,638	66	4.0
Academy Sponsor Led	818	39	4.8
Free School	21	1	4.8
Local authority maintained	11,024	373	3.4
Community School	6,243	269	4.3
Foundation School	573	26	4.5
Voluntary Aided School	2,672	41	1.5
Voluntary Controlled School	1,536	37	2.4
Total	13,501	479	3.5

Source: DfE analysis of provisional key stage 2 results

School type is shown as recorded on 11 September 2015.

¹² The numbers of schools which had eligible results in 2016 but not for three consecutive years are 893 schools at key stage 2 and 215 schools at key stage 4.

Table 2: Number of KS4 coasting schools by school type

School type	Eligible schools in 2016	Coasting	%
Academies	1,945	176	9.0
Academy Converter	1,314	63	4.8
Academy Sponsor Led	555	108	19.5
Free School	25	1	4.0
Studio School	25	4	16.0
University Technical College	26	0	0.0
Local authority maintained	1,090	151	13.9
Community School	527	71	13.5
Foundation School	259	58	22.4
Voluntary Aided School	270	20	7.4
Voluntary Controlled School	34	2	5.9
Other	15	0	0.0
City Technology College	3	0	0.0
Further Education	12	0	0.0
Total	3,050	327	10.7

Source: DfE analysis of provisional key stage 4 results

School type is shown as recorded on 11 September 2015.

Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC) regions

Table 3: Number of KS2 coasting schools by RSC region

RSC region	Eligible schools in 2016	Coasting	%
East Midlands & Humber	1,697	73	4.3
Lancashire & West Yorkshire	2,411	65	2.7
North East London & East of England	1,485	59	4.0
North	1,054	22	2.1
North West London & South Central	1,763	65	3.7
South London & South East England	2,020	59	2.9
South West	1,421	59	4.2
West Midlands	1,650	77	4.7
Total	13,501	479	3.5

Source: DfE analysis of provisional key stage 2 results; Edubase

Table 4: Number of KS4 coasting schools by RSC region

RSC region	Eligible schools in 2016	Coasting	%
East Midlands & Humber	354	58	16.4
Lancashire & West Yorkshire	482	81	16.8
North East London & East of England	342	17	5.0
North	230	25	10.9
North West London & South Central	434	30	6.9
South London & South East England	494	41	8.3
South West	307	31	10.1
West Midlands	407	44	10.8
Total	3,050	327	10.7

Source: DfE analysis of provisional key stage 4 results; Edubase

Effect of adjusting the definition

If the 2016 progress thresholds were set at higher or lower levels, this would affect the number of schools identified as coasting this year.

The distribution of school progress scores is set out in the technical guidance¹³ for key stage 2 and the provisional Statistical First Release¹⁴ for key stage 4.

Lower scenario examples

If the 2016 progress thresholds for key stage 2 were set 1 point lower, there would be 306 schools meeting the key stage 2 definition:

- English reading progress score below –3.5
- English writing progress score below –4.5
- Mathematics progress score below –3.5

If the 2016 progress threshold for key stage 4 was set 0.1 points lower, there would be 246 schools meeting the key stage 4 definition:

- Progress 8 score below -0.35

Higher scenario examples

If the 2016 progress thresholds for key stage 2 were set 1 point higher, there would be 630 schools meeting the key stage 2 definition:

- English reading progress score below –1.5
- English writing progress score below –2.5
- Mathematics progress score below –1.5

If the 2016 progress threshold for key stage 4 was set 0.1 points higher, there would be 389 schools meeting the key stage 4 definition:

- Progress 8 score below -0.15

¹³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/primary-school-accountability>

¹⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/gcse-and-equivalent-results-2015-to-2016-provisional>



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